

# HOW TO BE

an eco-friendly traveller

# IN 5 EASY STEPS



*Aga on the run*

# How to be an eco- friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

Travelling is a wonderful way to broaden your horizons, learn about new cultures, and create unforgettable memories. We all love it!

However, as with many other activities, travelling has a big impact on the environment:

- Carbon emissions associated with transportation.
- Excessive waste generated by tourists
- Environmental degradation and destruction of natural habitats.

**Travelling can do a lot of damage!**



## How to be an eco-friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

**I'll be straight with you being an eco-friendly traveller takes some effort.**

After travelling full-time for almost two years now, I still struggle. It's very easy to forget to pack a metal straw or to grab reusable cutlery when going to eat street food.

Plus, after seeing the huge amount of plastic being used in certain places, there were a lot of times, when I was wondering: "how will my one reusable straw change anything? - we will all drown in plastic anyway!".

But...

**Exploring the world should not come at the expense of our planet. We only have ONE.**

That's why in this mini guide, I'll share with you **5 steps towards being an eco-friendly traveller.**

# 1. Reduce your carbon footprint.

**Transport** in general **accounts for one-fifth of global carbon dioxide emissions**. While the data isn't particularly forthcoming, we all realize that...

**Air travel is one of the most environmentally unfriendly forms of travelling.**

Not only do airplanes **emit large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>)** - a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming, but they also **release nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>)**, which contributes to the formation of smog that causes respiratory problems and other health issues.

They also release some other nasty substances, that harm our health, but to simplify it:

**Yes, flying is bad!**



Now, I'm not saying that you have to be like Greta Thunberg and ditch flying completely - sometimes it's simply impossible. **But there are easy ways to be an eco-friendly traveller and reduce your carbon footprint, if only a bit.**

## How can you reduce your carbon footprint?

- **Avoid domestic and short haul flights** - since it's the takeoffs and landings that create most of an airplane's carbon emissions, studies show that **taking a short haul flight is actually the worst thing you can do for the environment.**
- **Try to book non-stop flights whenever you can** - for the same reasons as above.
- **Avoid flying first or business class** - I know, it sucks. Premium classes seem so luxurious and comfy, but flying this way is not eco-friendly.

### But what is it all about?

First and business class seats take up more space than economy class seats, meaning that fewer passengers can be accommodated on a flight.

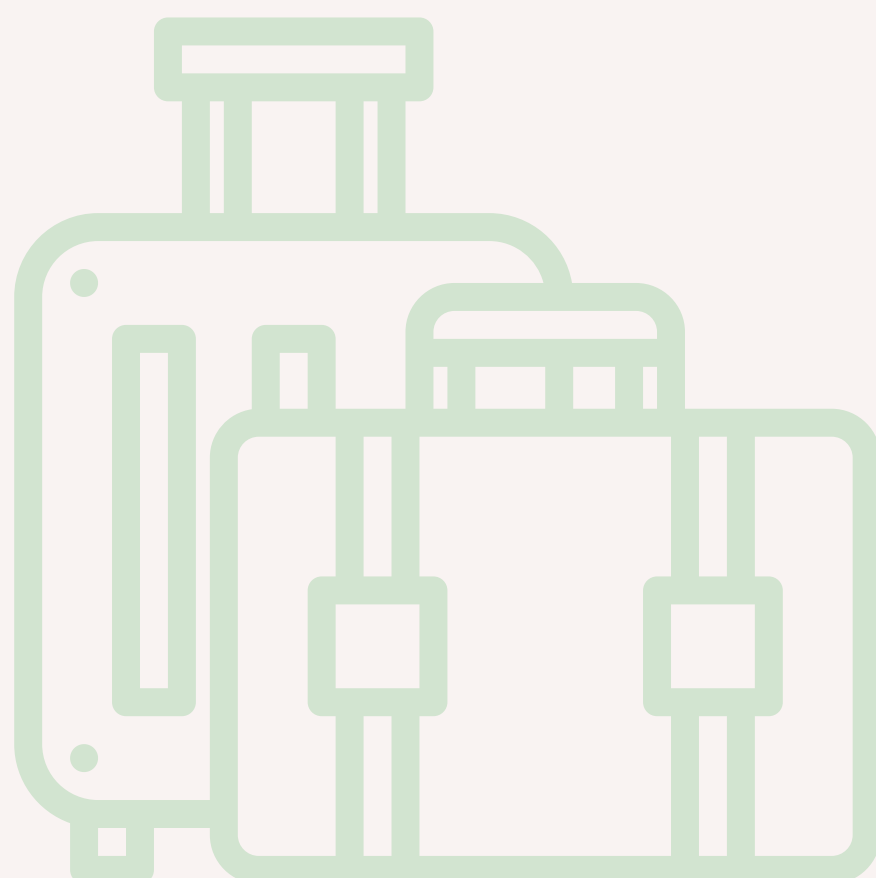
This results in a higher carbon footprint per passenger since the fixed costs of operating the flight are spread out among fewer people. The first and business class seats are also often larger and more luxurious, which means they are heavier.

The additional weight requires more fuel to be burned during the flight, resulting in higher carbon emissions.

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## Speaking of weight:

- **Pack light** - bringing fewer items on your flight reduces the weight of your luggage and can help reduce carbon emissions from your flight.
- **Choose more environmentally friendly airlines** - fuel efficiency, carbon emission, plastic usage: those are the factors you should be taking into consideration when picking an airline you'll fly with.
- **Pay off your carbon footprint** - many airlines and third-party organizations offer carbon offset programs that allow travellers to offset the carbon emissions from their flights by supporting carbon-reducing projects such as reforestation or renewable energy initiatives. Some airlines may even automatically include a carbon offset fee in your ticket price.



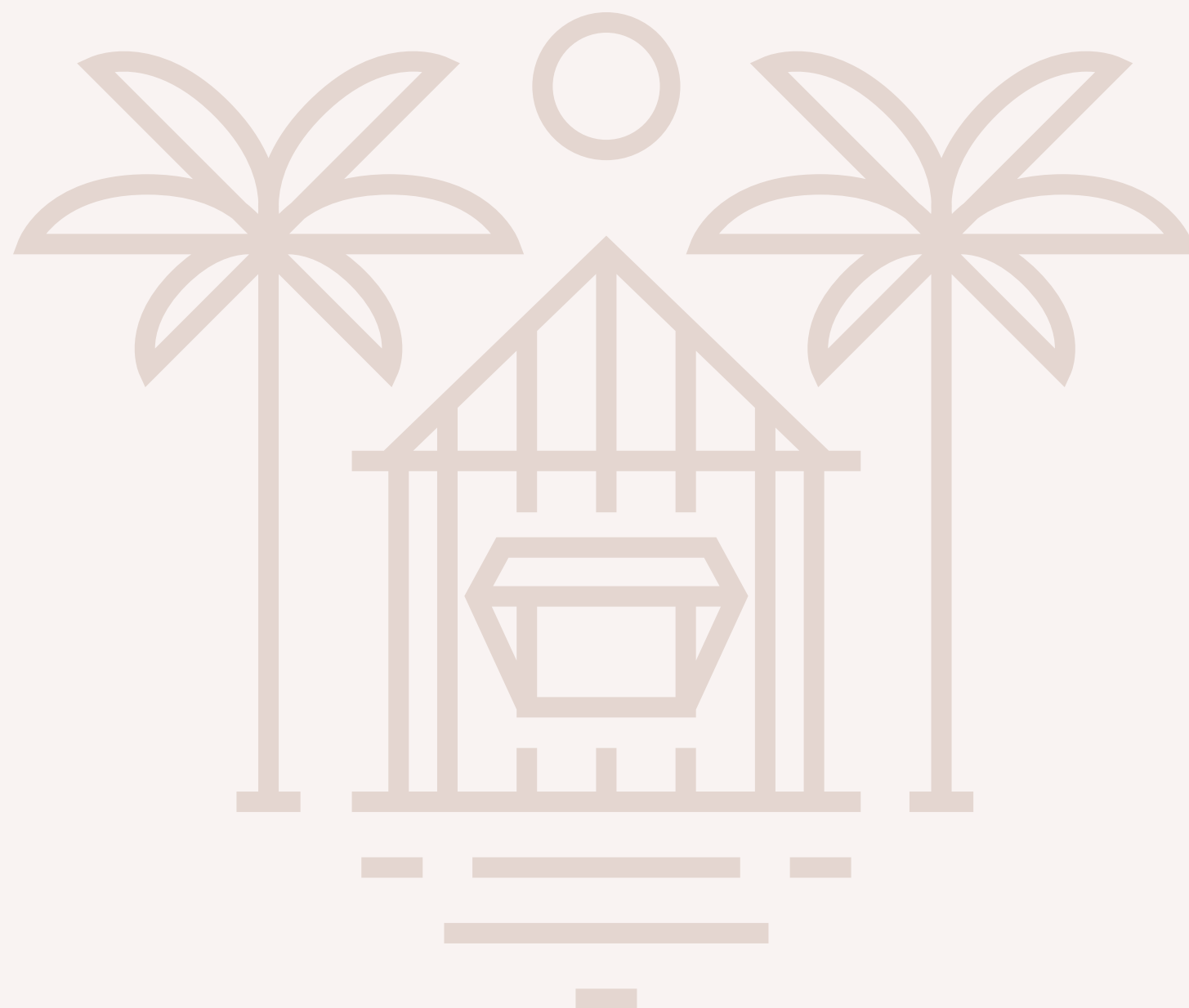
## 2. Treat your accommodation like home.

Well, I should start here by saying that the first thing to do to minimize your environmental impact and support sustainable tourism practices is to look for "eco-friendly accommodation". But it's not that easy.

From my experience, the recently added "travel sustainable" badge to booking.com means nothing, more eco-friendly booking pages, like bookdifferent.com are far from being bookable. And to be honest, not many of us have time to google for hours if a hotel we want to stay at, is truly sustainable.

Because a lot of them aren't.

**So once again, it's all up to us.**



### How can you be more eco-friendly at your accommodation?

Luckily, it's very easy. You just have to think of the place you're staying at like it was your home and it was you who paid electricity and water bills. So:

- **Take short showers, not baths.**
- **When leaving your room, switch everything off! Air conditioning included!**
- **Don't use the hotel's laundry service** - they usually wash every guest's clothes separately, even when there are only a few items.
- **Don't use single use hotel toiletries** - it's so much plastic! Luckily nowadays many places replaced these miniatures with full-sized refillable bottles, but it's still safer to bring a soap, shampoo, toothpaste and body lotion with you from home.
- **Don't have your room cleaned everyday** - let's be honest, you don't clean your house everyday, so you can survive in an uncleaned hotel room for a few nights.
- **Avoid getting new towels every day** - well, same as above.

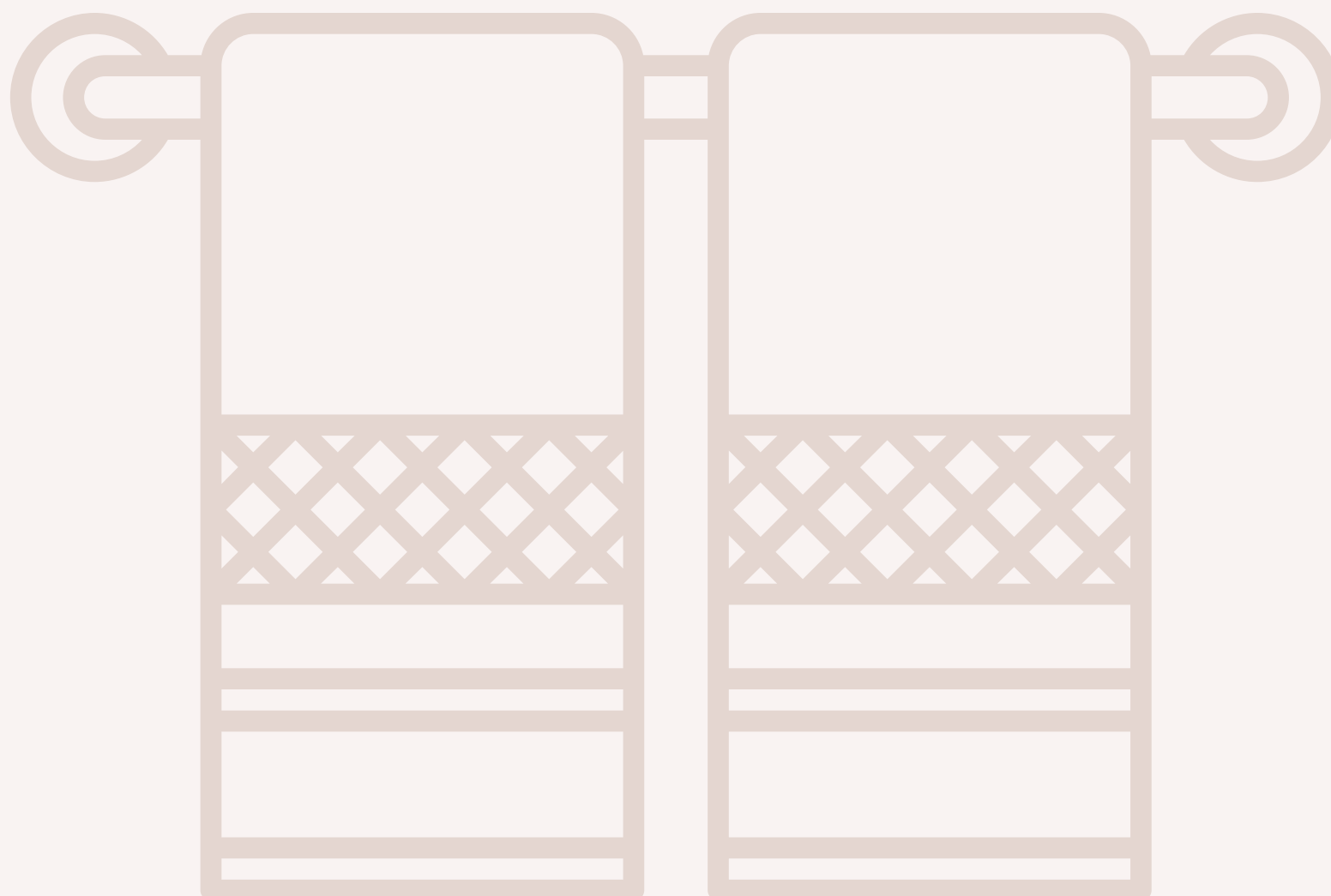


## Little tip about hotel towels

Recent hotels' practices regarding fresh towels are: **you want new towels - drop the dirty ones on the floor. You don't need fresh towels yet - hang them up.** But in my experience, hanging the towels up, does not guarantee them not being exchanged for fresh ones. Many times I hung my towels neatly on the bathroom door and they were still swapped for new ones. So the best way to prevent that from happening would be to:

**Leave the “Do Not Disturb” sign on the door of your room for the duration of your whole stay.**

This way the cleaning lady won't go into your room and you help to cut down on the use of chemical cleansing agents, electricity used in vacuuming, and the washing of bed linens and towels.



## 3.Reduce your plastic.

**Plastic waste has become a significant global concern.**

As it takes hundreds of years to decompose, it often ends up polluting oceans, harming wildlife, and degrading natural landscapes. And if you've ever travelled to South East Asian countries for example, you know how much single plastic is being used there on a daily basis.

Luckily, by adopting some simple practices, you can play a crucial role in reducing plastic consumption and promoting sustainable travel.



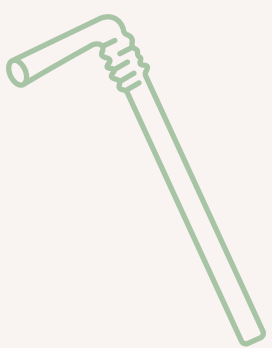
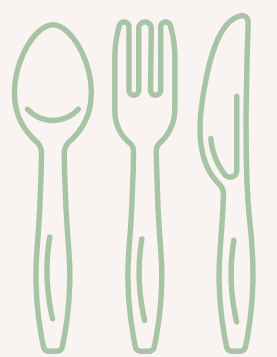
## How can you reduce your plastic usage while travelling?

- **Bring reusable alternatives** - there are many eco-friendly products that you can bring with you on your travels. They are lightweight, easy to carry, and can significantly reduce your plastic waste throughout the trip:



- **A tote bag**

- **Reusable cutlery**



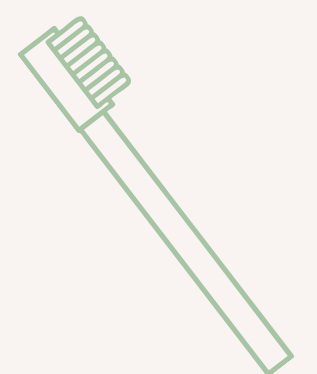
- **Reusable straws**

- **Travel lunch box**



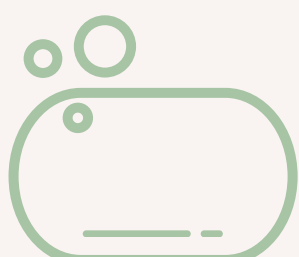
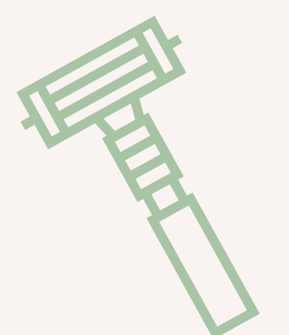
- **Reusable coffee mug**

- **Bamboo toothbrush**



- **Toothpaste tablets**

- **Reusable metal razor**



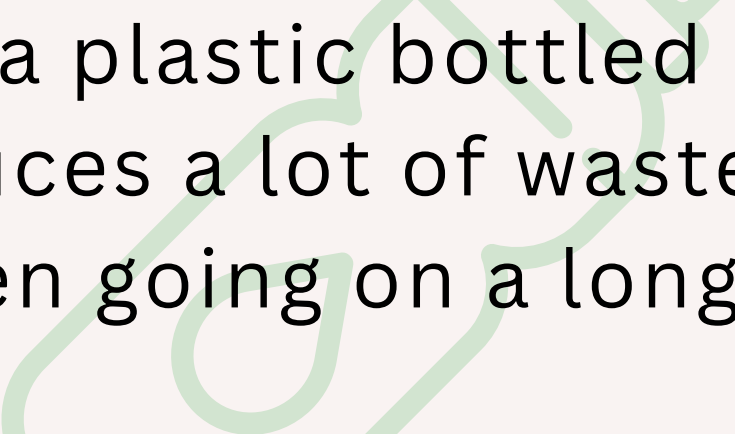
- **Soap bar, shampoo bar, conditioner bar**

## How to be an eco-friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

But if I have to name one thing that helped me save the most plastic during my travels, it'd have to be:

### **Reusable water bottle with filter.**

Not having to buy a plastic bottled drink every time you're thirsty reduces a lot of waste and it's an absolute must when going on a long or even on a short trip!



**Get the best and most reliable reusable water bottle with filter here!**

- **Refill and reuse** - if you don't have a bottle with filter, seek out refill stations for water whenever possible. In many destinations, you can find water fountains, refill stations, or restaurants that offer to fill your water bottle.

- **Avoid excessive packaging** - when shopping for souvenirs or essentials, try to choose products with minimal packaging. Refrain from buying items wrapped in layers of plastic or packaged in single-use containers.

## How to be an eco-friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

- **Dispose of waste responsibly** - properly dispose of your waste, especially plastic items, in designated recycling bins. If recycling facilities are not available, carry your plastic waste back to your accommodation and dispose of it there.

- **Support local and sustainable businesses** - look for local businesses that prioritize sustainability and environmentally friendly practices. Support restaurants that use reusable or biodegradable food containers and encourage local shops to reduce their plastic packaging.

- **Spread the word** - educate travelers and locals about the importance of reducing plastic waste. Lead by example and share your knowledge and experiences with others, inspiring them to adopt more sustainable practices.

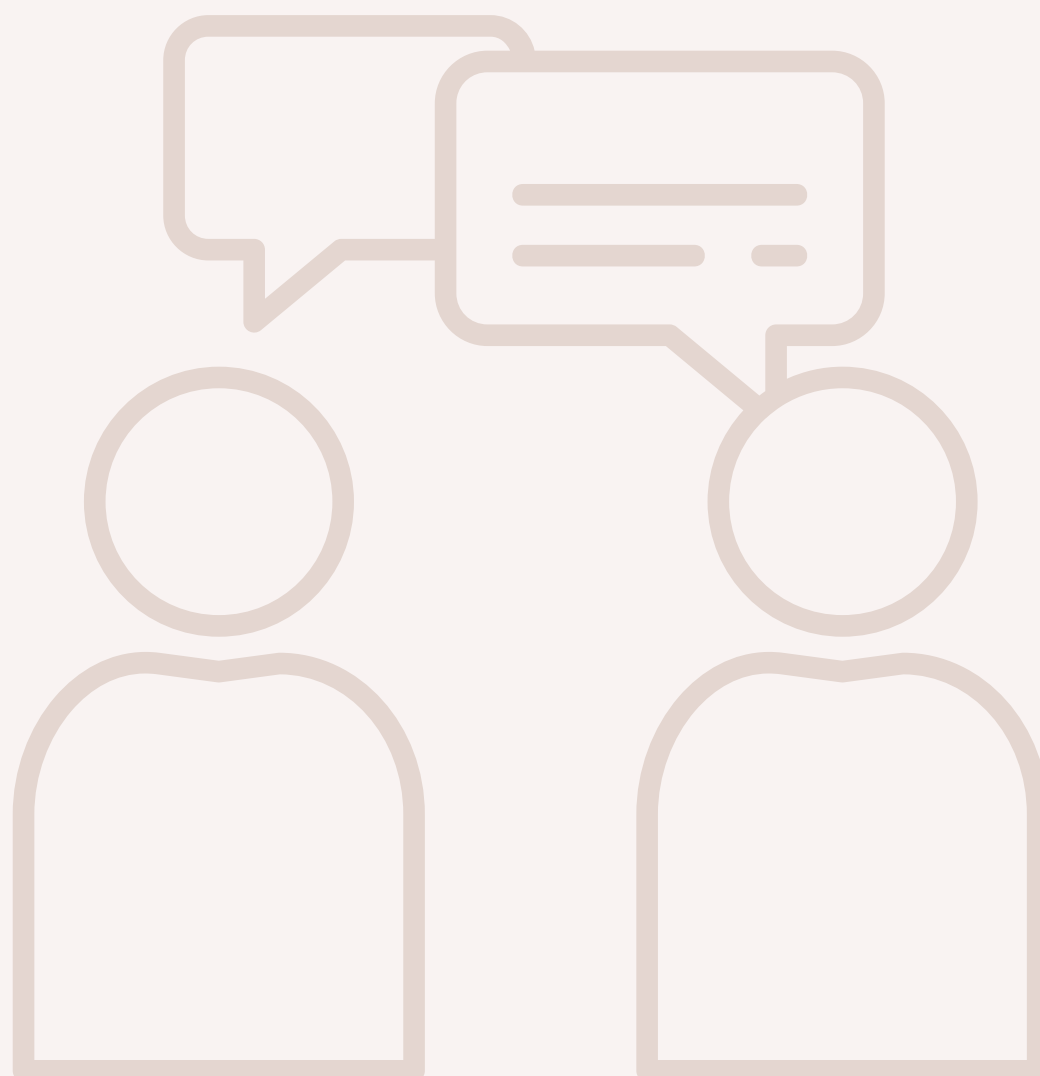


## 4. Be like a local.

When travelling, the best thing to do is to immerse yourself in local culture, customs and behaviours. It allows you to get to know the country better and to create more unique memories.



**It also helps the environment by reducing carbon emissions, conserving resources and promoting sustainable practices.**



### How can you live like a local while travelling?

- **Stay in locally owned accommodations** - by staying in locally owned hotels, guesthouses, and homestays, you contribute to the local economy and get a more authentic experience of the place you're visiting.
- **Shop in small, local stores** - shopping from locally owned stores instead of big chains not only keeps the small businesses alive, but also helps you to reduce the carbon footprint of your travels. And hey, another way to connect with local communities.
- **Eat at local restaurants** - that will benefit not only the communities, but also you. Local food is usually much cheaper than foreign and chain store food.



## How to be an eco- friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

- **Buy locally made, preferably handmade souvenirs** - now, you have to be careful with this. A lot of things look like it was handmade by a cute old lady, who's trying to make a living, but in reality it was mass produced in China. I bought a few things like that. So always check if there's no little "made in China" label on the product you want to buy.

- **Use local public transport** - it's a great way to reduce your carbon footprint and contribute to sustainable tourism. By choosing buses, trains, or other public transport options, you can help to reduce traffic congestion, air pollution and emissions, which are major contributors to climate change.





## 5. Respect the animals.

To make your trip as environmentally friendly as possible, we have to cover the animal kingdom as well. I wish everyone knew by now that for instance:

**Riding elephants is bad!**

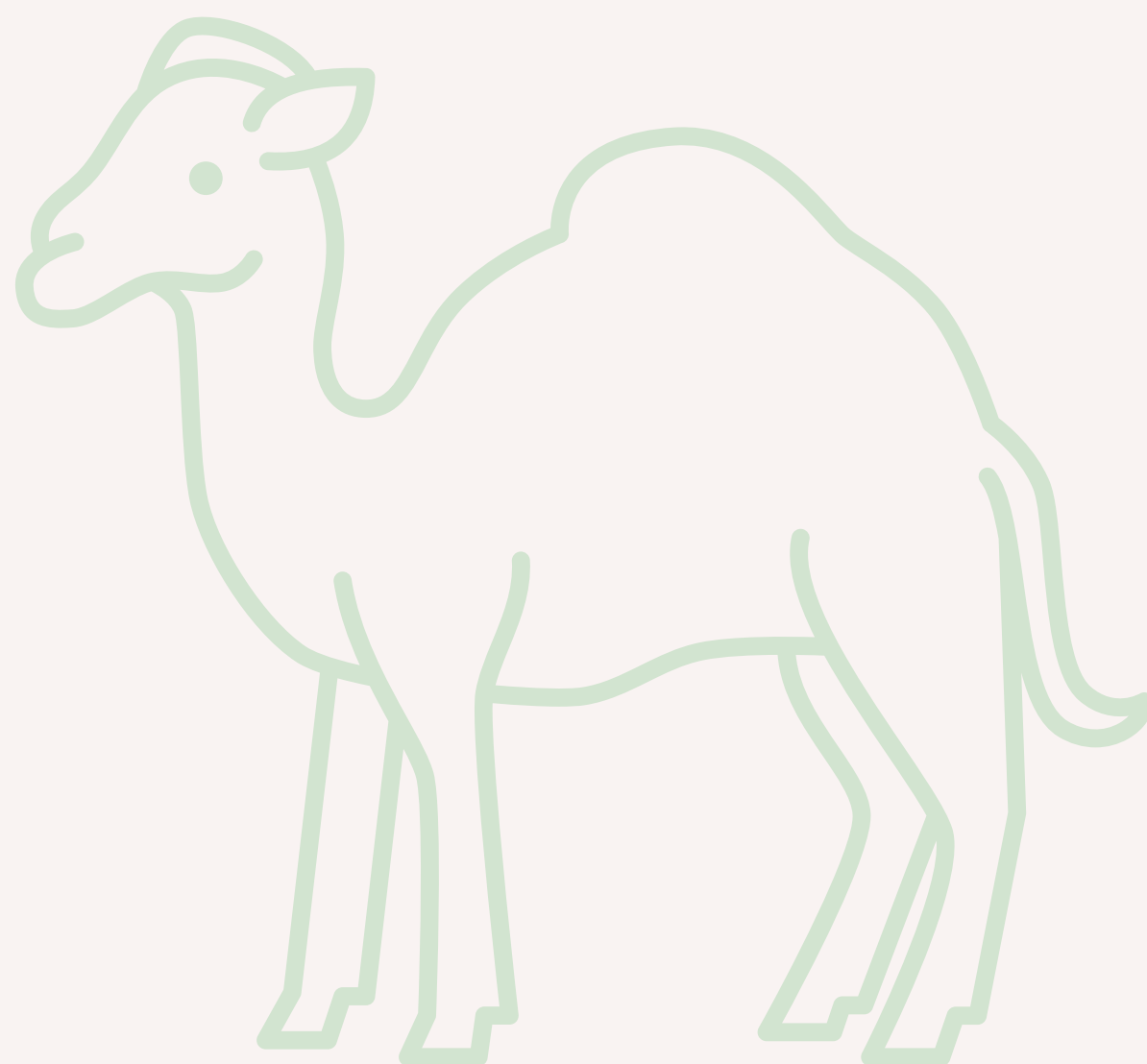
But my personal experience shows differently. As a big animal lover, it always makes me extremely sad and furious whenever I witness animal abuse or mistreatment.



### How can you respect animals while travelling?

- **Do your research** - learn about local wildlife and their habitats, and understand the dos and don'ts when interacting with them. This knowledge will help you understand how to interact with animals responsibly.

- **Don't ride the animals** - animals used for riding are often subjected to long working hours without adequate rest or proper care. They are forced to carry heavy loads that exceed their capacity, leading to physical injuries and pain. They might also be deprived of proper nutrition, shelter, and medical attention, putting their overall well-being at risk.



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- **Don't take selfies with sedated animals** - as innocent as it may seem, selfies with animals hide cruel truth. For example: selfie owls usually have a tendon cut in their wings so they cannot fly, lemurs have their teeth removed so they don't bite tourists, snakes have their fangs ripped and their mouths sewed so they can never strike anyone. That's just a drop in the ocean, so think about it next time you see an animal photo opportunity.



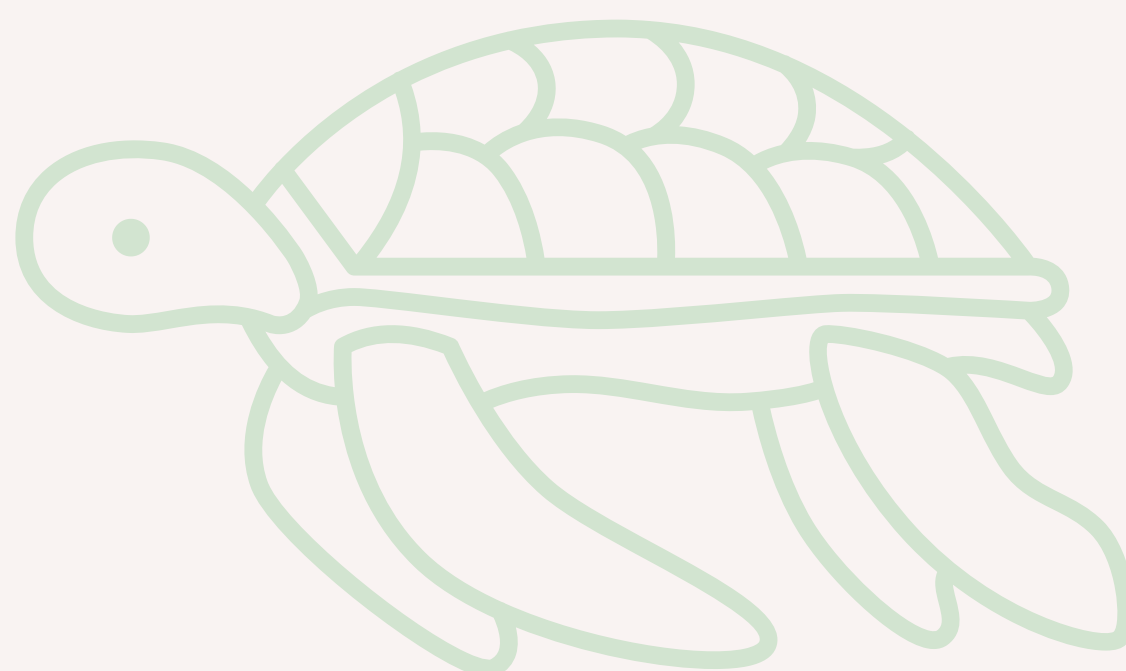
- **Don't feed wild animals** - feeding wild animals is not only illegal in some regions, but also disrupts their natural diet and can lead to dependency on humans. It can also alter their behaviour, making them more aggressive or reliant on human food sources. For example: **don't ever feed the monkeys!** Don't even bring any closed foods or drinks to places where you can encounter them.

## How to be an eco- friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

- **Treat animals with respect and care** - keep a safe distance and avoid getting too close to them. Do not touch, feed or disturb them, especially if they are wild animals. Respect their space and allow them to move freely.

- **Choose responsible tour operators** - who prioritize the well-being of the animals and their habitats.

- **Don't buy anything made from endangered plants/animals, unsustainable hardwoods, or ancient artifacts** - that includes items such as ivory, coral, fur, or products made from endangered marine species. By refusing to support the illegal wildlife trade, you contribute to the conservation of these animals.



## How to be an eco- friendly traveller in 5 easy steps

I hope you enjoyed my guide to being an eco-friendly traveller. Even if it all sounds overwhelming in the beginning, keep in mind that you don't have to introduce all those steps at once. Every little change you'll make in the way you're travelling right now, will have an impact on the environment. **So take it easy and enjoy green travelling.**

If you liked what you read here and you'd like to know more about eco-friendly and sustainable ways of travelling and living, have a look at my blog and my socials!

**I hope to see you there!**

**My website:**

[www.agaontherun.com](http://www.agaontherun.com)

**Social Media:**

[instagram.com/aga\\_on\\_the\\_run](https://www.instagram.com/aga_on_the_run)

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